

February 23, 2023  
Kaitlyn Kimball

Appropriations Committee

H.B. No. 6659 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025,  
AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR. (Elementary and Secondary Education Agencies)

Senator Osten, Representative Walker, Senator Berthel, Representative Nuccio, and esteemed Connecticut General Assembly members of the Appropriations Committee, my name Kaitlyn Kimball and I am the director of Agriculture at CitySeed. CitySeed is a non-profit in New Haven that focuses on growing equitable, local food systems. I am here today to speak on the budget for fiscal years 24 and 25, concerning elementary and secondary education. I respectfully request that funding for no-cost school meals for all is included. It is important that all schools that participate in the national school lunch program get funding for the cost of food that the USDA does not reimburse.

CitySeed supports this legislation because we strongly believe that all children need access to fresh, nutritious meals. Providing school meals at no cost to the student reduces food insecurity in our communities and removes hunger as a barrier to student success. We proudly support programs, such as School Meals For All, that enable food access, because we know they have a positive impact on community development. CitySeed Farmers Markets have one of the highest redemption rates of federal, state and local food assistance benefits in the state of Connecticut. We see first hand, every week of the year, the positive impact food assistance programs have in New Haven. We implore the appropriations committee to harbor a similar mindset of community as you continue to form the new budget.

I urge you to support this very needed program for our kids, their families, and their success.

Thank you.